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ABSTRACT

This collection of abstracts is part of a continuing series providing information on recent doctoral dissertations. The 12 titles deal with the following topics: (1) influences on beliefs about reading and learning to read and instructional behavior of student teachers, (2) teachers' decisions about basal reading lessons, (3) a study of effective verbal skills usage by student teachers, (4) the development and piloting of a teacher observation instrument to be used to improve reading comprehension instruction, (5) diagnostic agreement between learning specialists in diagnosing students with reading difficulties, (6) selected variables associated with the writing ability of beginning teacher education students, (7) effectiveness of a reading comprehension inservice in grades one through four, (8) a descriptive study of microcomputers and reading--a survey using selected members of the International Reading Association in the state of Maryland, (9) the effects of training experienced teachers in enthusiasm on students' attitudes toward reading, (10) teacher and administrator perceptions of effective teaching of reading/study skills, (11) impact on student achievement of a study skills teacher inservice program, and (12) an observational study of fourth-grade teachers' encouragement of comprehension monitoring strategies among good and poor readers. (HTH)

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Abstracts of the following dissertations are included in this collection:

Bailey, Dora Louise
INFLUENCES ON BELIEFS ABOUT READING AND LEARNING TO READ AND INSTRUCTIONAL BEHAVIOR OF STUDENT TEACHERS

Banker, Bonita J.
TEACHERS' DECISIONS ABOUT BASAL READING LESSONS

Conver, Michael Edward
A STUDY OF EFFECTIVE VERBAL SKILLS USAGE BY STUDENT TEACHERS

Hildenbrand, Frederic Russell
THE DEVELOPMENT AND PILOTING OF A TEACHER OBSERVATION INSTRUMENT TO BE USED TO IMPROVE READING COMPREHENSION INSTRUCTION

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DIAGNOSTIC AGREEMENT BETWEEN LEARNING SPECIALISTS IN DIAGNOSING STUDENTS WITH READING DIFFICULTIES

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New, Joanne Enyeart
EFFECTIVENESS OF A READING COMPREHENSION INSERVICE IN GRADES 1-4

Schwartz, Olivia Lowry
A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY: MICRO-COMPUTERS AND READING--A SURVEY USING SELECTED MEMBERS OF THE INTERNATIONAL READING ASSOCIATION IN THE STATE OF MARYLAND

Streeter, Brenda Blackston
THE EFFECTS OF TRAINING EXPERIENCED TEACHERS IN ENTHUSIASM ON STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARD READING

Taylor Rill, Mary
TEACHER AND ADMINISTRATOR PERCEPTIONS OF EFFECTIVE TEACHING OF READING/STUDY SKILLS

Townsend, Brenda S.
STUDY SKILLS: IMPACT OF A TEACHER INSERVICE PROGRAM ON STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Winfield, Evelyn Taylor
FOURTH-GRADE TEACHERS' ENCOURAGEMENT OF COMPREHENSION MONITORING STRATEGIES AMONG GOOD AND POOR READERS: AN OBSERVATIONAL STUDY

INFLUENCES ON BELIEFS ABOUT READING AND LEARNING TO READ AND INSTRUCTIONAL BEHAVIOR OF STUDENT TEACHERS

Order No. DA8429778

BAILEY, DORA LOUISE, PH.D. *Kent State University*, 1984. 366pp. Director: Richard T. Vacca

This study was designed to generate descriptive data that would lead to an understanding of the influences on beliefs about reading and learning to read that primary level student teachers hold and develop during student teaching. Two student teachers were intensely observed and interviewed in order to uncover the influential factors that impact their implicit reading beliefs.

The impetus for the inquiry arose from noting the lack of change in teaching of reading beliefs and behaviors. In an attempt to understand teachers' beliefs, the student teaching experience was chosen as a beginning point. It is a natural pivotal point for inquiry since this is the transition period from student to teacher.

In Stage 1, Fall of 1983, seven primary level student teachers in a northeastern Ohio university were identified as having various frameworks of reading along the Bottom-up/Top-down continuum. A modified version of Gove's (1983) Conceptual Framework of Reading Interview was used. The modification was to add an open-ended probe regarding the student teachers' own ideas about reading, learning to read and teaching of reading. Through the probe, three factors of concern that could be influences on beliefs about reading from the perspectives of the student teachers themselves were identified: (1) performance, (2) information sources, and (3) management of reading instruction.

In Stage 2, Fall, 1983, two student teachers, who had been identified as holding opposite frameworks of reading, were extensively observed and interviewed during nine weeks of their student teaching. Significant others were also interviewed and all documents and artifacts deemed pertinent to this inquiry were examined. The descriptions and analyses of the data showed that the two student teachers evidenced a change in beliefs and in their instructional behaviors by the end of their student teaching. The results of the descriptions, analyses, and triangulation of the data showed that: (1) the teachers' own schemata for teaching reading and for learning reading, and (2) the commerical materials available in the classroom, especially the basal were weighty influences on their reading beliefs. In addition, it was noted that the cooperating teacher was not a primary influence in the development of the student teachers' reading beliefs and behaviors.

TEACHERS' DECISIONS ABOUT BASAL READING LESSONS

Order No. DA8510717

BANKER, BONITA J., ED.D. *University of Kentucky*, 1984. 148pp. Co-Directors: Connie A. Bridge, Elfrieda H. Hiebert

The present study was designed to document the nature of teachers' use of basal reading materials in planning for reading instruction. Researchers have found teachers' activities with different reading groups to be an important source of variation across reading ability groups. Therefore, teachers' plans for using basal reading material were examined in relationship to the low-ability and high-ability reading groups and across primary and intermediate grade levels.

Twenty-six teachers, consisting of thirteen primary- and thirteen intermediate-grade teachers, were asked to perform two planning tasks. First, they were given a unit from the basal reader manual at either the second or fifth grade and were asked to write one week's lesson plans for the high-ability and low-ability groups. In a second task teachers were given a single story from the unit and were asked to specify in detail the activities in the manual suggestions they would use, delete or modify.

The data obtained from the lesson plans on both the week's lesson plans and the single story indicated that teachers in this study closely followed the advice of the manual in planning their reading lessons. The inclusion of self-initiated categories were rare occurrences. Intermediate teachers planned for more activities than did primary teachers and more activities were planned for low-ability groups than for high-ability groups. In the planning process teachers varied in the consistency of their use of all the categories of the Directed Reading Activity by simply omitting some and repeating others. Despite minimal directions from the text manuals, teachers readily made decisions regarding pacing students through the materials. The primary teachers planned for more stories and workbook pages for the high-ability group than the low-ability group. Intermediate teachers moved the low-ability group through the stories at the same pace as the high-ability group.

The teachers in this study basically followed the suggestions in the basal manuals in developing their lesson plans. Yet, within this framework, teachers appeared to have certain ideas as to what is more appropriate for low-ability and high-ability groups and for primary and intermediate levels.

A STUDY OF EFFECTIVE VERBAL SKILLS USAGE BY STUDENT TEACHERS

Order No. DA8504996

CONVER, MICHAEL EDWARD, PH.D. *Illinois State University*, 1984. 106pp.

This research was concerned with determining the value to public school administrators of using selected variables as a means to predict effective verbal skills usage by prospective elementary teachers. The variables selected as most likely to be correlated with verbal skills were: high school rank, education of parents, college grade point average, grade in the required courses Speech 110 and English 101, number of speech courses completed, number of English courses completed, and number of foreign language courses completed. The speech, English, and foreign language courses were those which could be used to fulfill the Group I University Studies requirement in communications.

The dependent variables were low-inference speech behaviors identified in earlier research as having a strong relationship with student achievement and which were hypothesized to be dependent upon verbal skills rather than grasp of subject matter. They were: vagueness terms, mazes, and "uhs."

Audio tapes were made of subjects during their student teaching experience while instructing their classes. The occurrence of the low-inference speech behaviors constituted a verbal skill index and was recorded for each subject by trained investigators and then the relationships were statistically analyzed by computer.

Correlation and multiple regression procedures were used to answer two research questions: (1) What is the strength and direction of correlation between each of the independent variables and the verbal skills index? (2) What variable or cluster of variables, if any, provides the strongest correlation with the dependent variable?

From the statistical analysis of the data, the author concluded: (1) The demographic variable providing the best predictive insight in making hiring decisions directed toward an effort to obtain instructional staff with the most effective verbal skills was college grade point average. No other variable studied proved to be a useful aid in such decisions. (2) No evidence existed to indicate that there was a positive effect on student teachers' verbal skills exerted by either the required or elective courses in the communications field available at the University.

THE DEVELOPMENT AND PILOTING OF A TEACHER OBSERVATION INSTRUMENT TO BE USED TO IMPROVE READING COMPREHENSION INSTRUCTION

Order No. DA8510452

HILDENBRAND, FREDERIC RUSSELL, ED.D. *University of Maryland*, 1984. 173pp. Director: Robert M. Wilson

Public concern about the decline of Scholastic Aptitude Test scores has prompted practitioners in the field of education, among others, to examine the teaching of reading. The purpose of this study was to develop an observation instrument to aid classroom observers concerned with reading comprehension instruction. The study also involved piloting the instrument in several elementary school classrooms.

In order to construct an instrument that would be comprehensive in scope yet easily manipulable in the classroom, the recent research and theoretical literature was surveyed. Those teacher behaviors cited as fostering reading comprehension were considered for inclusion on the instrument. Development of the instrument consisted of classroom testing over a period of several months. The final edition of the instrument was piloted in classrooms with six different reading groups under the instruction of veteran teachers.

The results, obtained by the use of pre- and post-observation questionnaires and by comparing two observations of each class, indicated that teachers' instructional behaviors can be improved by using the observation instrument in reading classes and then reviewing the data obtained with the teachers. Teachers generally reported increased awareness of their own classroom practices and found that the completed observation instrument and followup conference assisted in planning for future lessons.

DIAGNOSTIC AGREEMENT BETWEEN LEARNING SPECIALISTS IN DIAGNOSING STUDENTS WITH READING DIFFICULTIES

Order No. DA8507059

ISAACSON, ARLENE GAIL, PH.D. *University of Oregon*, 1984. 142pp. Adviser: Ruth Waugh

For students with reading difficulties, diagnosis as the basis of remediation is a commonly accepted practice. Diagnosis is used by specialists to determine the reason an individual is having difficulty in reading and to determine an adequate treatment plan. The purpose of this study was to examine the amount of diagnostic agreement that occurred between learning specialists who treated the same student and then rated that student on four decoding scales: phonics, word parts, whole word, and context.

Evidence for a lack of agreement between specialists was demonstrated by low Pearson Product Moment correlations (.14 to .70, too low to make predictions about individual subjects). Twelve out of the fifteen correlations were below .60.

The differences in the specialists' mean ratings on the four decoding scales were calculated. The data indicated that two out of the five ANOVAS computed, were significant at the .05 level, with one of those two being significant at the .01 level. Nine out of the fifteen *ts* computed, were significant at the .05 level, with seven of those nine being significant at the .01 level.

The relationship between the specialists was examined. Eight out of the nine learning specialists worked at the same evaluation clinic, and followed a case study approach to remediation. (Those individuals were referred to as first and second team members.) The ninth learning specialist was a disgnostician at a city high school and followed a criterion-referenced approach to remediation. (This individual was called the word analysis tester.) Only slightly more agreement occurred between the first and second team members, than between those individuals and the word analysis tester.

The lack of agreement among diagnosticians raises serious questions about the practice of diagnosis prior to remediation. Similar disagreement among diagnosticians, found by researchers at the Institute for Research on Teaching and at the Institute for Research on Learning Disabilities at Minnesota, combine to suggest that the process of diagnosis does not lead to agreement about the reason an individual is having difficulty in reading or about the plan for treatment.

SELECTED VARIABLES ASSOCIATED WITH THE WRITING ABILITY OF BEGINNING TEACHER EDUCATION STUDENTS

Order No. DA8505842

LAPLANTE, DOUGLAS ALLAN, PH.D. *Iowa State University*, 1984. 104pp. Supervisor: Larry H. Ebbers

This study focused on the writing ability of beginning teacher education students at Iowa State University. Writing samples of 332 students enrolled in their first education course (Education 204 - Foundations of American Education) were collected during the Fall 1981, Spring 1982, Fall 1982, and Fall 1983 semesters. The writing samples were evaluated by the course instructors and by evaluators in analyzing English compositions. Data regarding student demographic and academic characteristics were also collected. The purposes of the study were to determine the degree to which the students' writing ability evaluations correlated with selected student demographic and academic characteristics; to determine if the Education 204 instructors and the English evaluators differed significantly in their evaluation of the Education 204 student compositions; and to determine if student writing ability could be predicted from selected variables.

Significant Pearson correlation and t - test values affirmed the hypotheses that significant relationships existed between selected student demographic and academic variables, and that the Education 204 instructor writing evaluations differed from those of the English evaluators. Multiple regression procedures were also used to develop three models designed to predict student writing ability from selected combinations of student demographic and academic variables.

EFFECTIVENESS OF A READING COMPREHENSION INSERVICE IN GRADES 1-4

Order No. DA8508509

NEW, JOANNE ENYEART, ED.D. *University of Maryland*, 1984. 127pp. Director: Robert M. Wilson

There is growing evidence that learning how to read demands not only time to learn but quality assistance from the teacher. Quality of instruction includes both the content taught and the manner in which it is taught. The purpose of this study was to explore whether or not elementary teachers would implement research-based reading comprehension strategies presented in an inservice program, and if the teachers' attitudes toward the strategies and the program would be positive. It also included an assessment of the teachers' performance while implementing the strategies.

A total of 18 volunteer teachers in grades one through four comprised the sample of the population for this study: two were first grade teachers, five were second grade teachers, three were fourth grade teachers, four were special education teachers, and one was a basic skills teacher.

The inservice program addressed the latest research findings in reading comprehension and presentations of strategies using a mastery learning model incorporating effective teaching behaviors. Surveys were completed by the teachers to determine their attitudes toward reading comprehension instruction, the strategies presented in the inservice program, and the inservice program.

In determining the degree of implementation and effectiveness of the strategies and the attitudes of the teachers toward the strategies and the inservice program, data were analyzed using percentage tables and means. Percentage tables and means were also used to assess the teachers' performance while implementing the strategies and how many teachers requested released time for observing other teachers. The conclusions supported by this study are as follows: (1) The teachers who participated in the reading comprehension inservice implemented the new strategies in their classrooms. (2) The teachers who participated in the reading comprehension inservice reported positive attitudes toward the new strategies after implementation in their classrooms. (3) Teachers' performance while implementing the new reading comprehension strategies can be assessed. (4) The teachers who participated in the reading comprehension inservice reported positive attitudes about the inservice and the follow-up assistance. (5) All of the teachers requested released time to observe other teachers using the new strategies with their students. (Abstract shortened with permission of author.)

A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY: MICROCOMPUTERS AND READING--A SURVEY USING SELECTED MEMBERS OF THE INTERNATIONAL READING ASSOCIATION IN THE STATE OF MARYLAND

Order No. DA8516237

SCHWARTZ, OLIVIA LOWRY, ED.D. *The George Washington University*, 1985. 274pp. Chairperson: Ruth Irene Peterson

This study investigated the status of microcomputers and reading in the state of Maryland. To study the problem, the researcher chose as a population all of the members of the International Reading Association in the state of Maryland. From this population there was drawn a sample of 289 using a systematic random sampling technique. The sample was sent a self-report survey constructed by the researcher. This survey had six major parts: Facts About You, Use of Microcomputers, Experience with Microcomputers, Interest in Microcomputers, Questions About Hardware and Questions About Software.

A one-dimensional chi square was used to determine if there were any significant differences in the total responses on the hypotheses in each category. Then a k-dimensional chi square was used to test for the effect, if any, that the variables Length of Educational Service, Geographical Location and Assigned Position would have on specific hypotheses.

Based on the findings, there is no significant difference in the choices made in regard to Geographical Location (Urban, Suburban and Rural). Assigned Position (Classroom teacher, Administrator and Reading teacher) had no significant effect on the results. However, the Length of Educational service significantly effected the way in which the microcomputer(s) is used.

The results of the study indicate that there is a vast resource of personnel in the reading field who are willing to use the microcomputer for teaching reading. They have the interest and a great desire to become more skillful in microcomputer use. Their positive attitudes toward computers make them willing to learn and to take on more responsibility for the computer if it means more computer time for reading instruction. Those administrative personnel who are in charge of program planning and program implementation would be well advised to use the readily available and willing people who are already in place in schools and offices throughout the state.

THE EFFECTS OF TRAINING EXPERIENCED TEACHERS IN ENTHUSIASM ON STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARD READING

Order No. DA8508199

STREETER, BRENDA BLACKSTON, PH.D. *University of South Carolina*, 1984. 96pp. Major Professor: Paul Conrad Berg

Statement of the Problem. The purpose of this study was to determine if enthusiasm training would increase levels of observable enthusiasm in experienced teachers, and if this training would result in a change in students' attitudes toward reading.

Method. Nineteen experienced teachers from the Horry County School District were randomly assigned to the experimental group (N = 10) and the control group (N = 9). The researcher videotaped the teachers' presentations of a skills reading lesson prior to the enthusiasm training procedure. The students in the reading group were given the *SRA-Primary Level* by the researcher immediately after the videotaping. The experimental group teachers were trained in enthusiasm by the researcher, and the control group teachers received a workshop on parent-teacher conferences that followed the same format as the enthusiasm training. Six weeks after training, the researcher again videotaped the teachers' presentations of a skills reading lesson to the same middle ability reading group. The researcher immediately administered the *SRA-Primary Level* to the same students. The videotapes were observed and rated for enthusiasm by two trained raters.

Results. The results of the *t* tests computed on the gain scores of each indicator of enthusiasm and the overall enthusiasm gain score between the experimental and the control group teachers indicate that the experimental group teachers significantly increased ($p < .001$) their levels of enthusiasm on each indicator from pre- to posttraining. This did not hold true for the control group. Analysis of covariance on posttraining enthusiasm scores, using pretraining enthusiasm scores as a covariate, demonstrated a statistically significant ($p < .01$) difference between groups.

The results of the *t* tests computed on gain scores of each factor dimension of the reading attitude scale indicated that the experimental group students significantly decreased their scores on the Expressed Reading Difficulty (ERD) factor, whereas, the control group did not. Analysis of covariance on the posttest factor scores, using pretest scores as a covariate, indicated a significant difference ($p < .05$) between the experimental and the control group students on the ERD factor.

Conclusion. This study found that teacher enthusiasm training had an effect on teachers' abilities to display high levels of observable enthusiasm and on students' attitudes toward reading.

TEACHER AND ADMINISTRATOR PERCEPTIONS OF EFFECTIVE TEACHING OF READING/STUDY SKILLS

Order No. DA8514336

TAYLOR RILL, MARY, ED.D. *Arizona State University*, 1985. 122pp. Chairperson: Harold B. Hunnicutt

Can teaching effectiveness and teaching competency be improved through an in-service training program on reading/study skills? Teachers in Phoenix Elementary School District Number One were randomly assigned to experimental and control groups. Teachers in the experimental and control groups were administered a pretreatment self-report on perceptions of reading/study skills, a posttreatment self-report on perceptions of reading/study skills, and a self-report on competencies in teaching reading/study skills. In addition, five administrators rated each teacher for teacher effectiveness. Teachers' perceptions of teacher effectiveness were analyzed with analysis of covariance, where teachers' pretreatment perceptions of competencies were covariates. Furthermore, teachers' posttreatment ratings of teaching competencies were analyzed with analysis of covariance, where teachers' pretreatment perceptions of competencies were covariates.

The findings suggested that in-service training in teaching reading and study skills improves teaching effectiveness in reading and study skills; however, teachers' perceptions of their own competencies in teaching reading and study skills are unaffected by in-service training; that is, teachers perceive themselves as competent regardless of whether they happen to be effective. These findings and conclusions should be assimilated by the district through other in-service training programs, workshops, and guidelines prepared for teachers within the school district.

STUDY SKILLS: IMPACT OF A TEACHER INSERVICE PROGRAM ON STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Order No. DA8516107

TOWNSEND, BRENDA S., PH.D. *The Pennsylvania State University*, 1985. 147pp. Adviser: Eunice N. Askov

The purpose of this study was to assess the effects of a competency-based content area reading project for inservice teachers on the reading/study skills achievement of their students. Also examined was the influence of the type of assessment instrument used to measure reading/study skills achievement.

The null hypotheses of this study were that there would be no significant differences in the reading/study skills achievement scores as measured by norm-referenced (NRT) or criterion-referenced (CRT) tests; and in the number of students who attain mastery on the CRT for students in the experimental and comparision groups.

The experimental group subjects were taught by teachers who participated in the content area reading project. The comparison groups' teachers matched, as closely as possible, the project teachers on specified criteria and had not participated in the project.

The *Comprehensive Tests of Basic Skills* (*CTBS*) reading subtest, administered to the subjects in the spring, was used as a proxy pretest. One year later the subjects were given the *Work-Study Skills* subtests of the *Iowa Tests of Basic Skills*, an NRT, and selected subtests of the *Wisconsin Tests of Reading Skill Development: Study Skills*, (*WTRSD:SS*), a CRT, to measure reading/study skills achievement.

The data were analyzed separately for each of the subtests and the total test of the *ITBS* and the *WTRSD:SS* per matched teacher groups with analyses of covariance. The raw scores were adjusted to control for general reading ability, using the *CTBS* scores as the covariate. The Chi square test was used to analyze the data according to mastery versus nonmastery on the *WTRSD:SS*.

The findings were as follows: no definite pattern of significant differences in reading/study skills achievement was established across the matched teacher groups as measured by the NRT or the CRT. In addition, no pattern of significant differences in the number of students who attained mastery on the CRT was found. The null hypotheses were upheld.

The results of this study did not yield conclusive evidence concerning the influence of a teacher inservice program on student achievement. Neither the NRT nor the CRT was favored for the evaluation of a teacher inservice program in terms of student achievement, although the CRT yielded more specific information.

FOURTH-GRADE TEACHERS' ENCOURAGEMENT OF COMPREHENSION MONITORING STRATEGIES AMONG GOOD AND POOR READERS: AN OBSERVATIONAL STUDY

Order No. DA8508556

WINFIELD, EVELYN TAYLOR, PH.D. *University of Maryland*, 1984. 212pp. Director: Ruth Garner

A major purpose of education is learning how to learn as an internalized process. Awareness and deliberate control of one's own cognitive processes have been labeled as *metacognition*. A subordinate of metacognition, *comprehension monitoring*, facilitates awareness in reading for meaning and remembering. It includes strategies which can be categorized under *planning, on-line monitoring, storing and retrieving information,* and *evaluating*.

Teachers' encouragement of comprehension monitoring strategies in teaching good and poor readers in the fourth grade was the focus of this correlational study. Research questions addressed: (1) differences in number and type of strategies used by the teachers in each group and (2) relationships among teacher strategies observed, teacher strategies self-reported, and student reports of comprehension monitoring strategies used.

Based on a review of the literature and a survey of reading experts, an observation form listing 20 strategies was constructed. The investigator and one assistant observed ten fourth-grade teachers as they taught good-reader and poor-reader groups. Each teacher taught two expository selections; each selection was taught over a two-day span. Each group read the same selections.

Data were obtained from frequency counts recorded during observations and from verbal reports given by the teachers and students.

Results of the chi square statistics and descriptive analyses revealed that teachers' encouragement of comprehension monitoring strategies was independent of the reading group taught.

Relationships among observers', teachers', and students' reports on comprehension monitoring used in the classrooms were not statistically determined because of insufficient data obtained from verbal reports.

In this study, teachers encouraged comprehension monitoring more frequently in the *planning* and *on-line monitoring* stages of the reading lesson than they did in the *storing and retrieving* and *evaluating* stages. Implications for curricular modifications, instruction to model processes, supervision of a sequence of lessons, and staff development are drawn.

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